GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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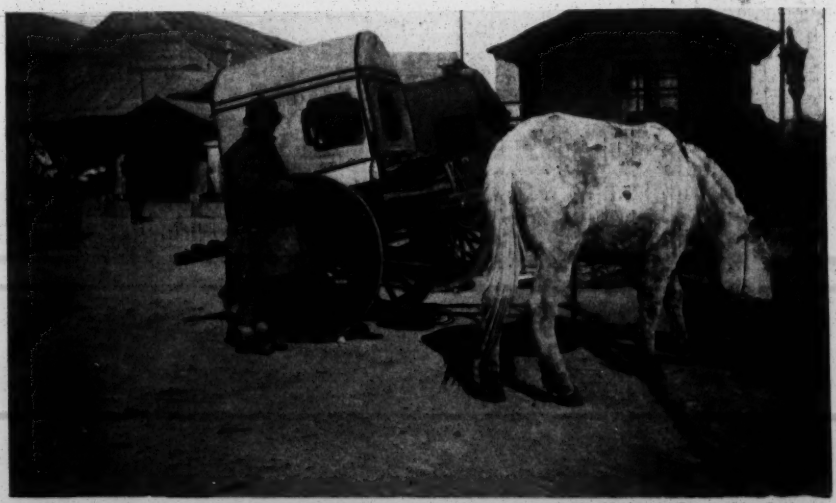

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THE CARTS, WHICH LOOK LIKE TOYS TO WESTERN EYES, ARE AMONG THE MANY FASCINATING SIGHTS OF PEKING

DO YOU WISH YOUR BULLETINS CONTINUED?

Requests for the Geographic News Bulletin must be renewed if you asked for them last February. If you desire the Bulletins continued please notify The National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C., promptly. The blank following Bulletin No. 1 may be used.

The Geographic News Bulletin is published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Memel: An Orphan Area

SUPPOSE our New England coast subject to a peace treaty adjustment which would make Massachusetts and Rhode Island an independent country, Boston a free city, the lower part of Maine still a part of the United States, and Eastport, Maine, subject to the League of Nations. Then let a controversy start regarding the future of Eastport, whether it shall be assigned to Canada, made a free state under a Brazil protectorate, or be incorporated in our imaginary nation of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

That is an imaginary situation fully comparable to conditions in the Memel district of East Prussia, which has just been invaded by a Lithuanian army. Its status now is that of an internationalized region, which adds to the "where-do-we-go-from-here" state of mind of its citizens.

Races Add Complication

Even then the racial factor would be missing, and to make our hypothetical New England comparable to that along the Baltic shores we would have to picture Eastport to be nearly half populated by French Canadians who most naturally cast their eyes toward their own Dominion, and to suppose the intervening nation made of the Bay State and Rhode Island to be peopled by Latin Americans.

Memel was land's end for the former German Empire, situated at the apex of the northern triangle of East Prussia. Hamburg and Bremen, which usually come to mind as cities of northern Germany, are in the approximate latitude of Liverpool, while Memel is on a line with Glasgow and Edinburgh. Its situation is like that of New York, were Long Island a peninsula with its eastern end joined to the Connecticut shores above New Haven. The Kurisches Haff is considerably larger than Long Island Sound and the neck of this inland sea bottle, where Memel lies, is very narrow.

Germany's Northernmost Gateway

A glance at a map of Northern Europe will show why Memel commanded the shipping of the Baltic even as Bremen and Hamburg were the entrepots for overseas commerce. Memel was the gateway to the erstwhile German Empire from Stockholm, Riga, Copenhagen, and Petrograd. Then note the course of the Memel, or Niemen River and you can realize readily how the city played the middleman for West Poland and Russia. The river bore great rafts of logs which were sawed at Memel's mills and this lumber product was carried to every Baltic city, a portion of it going back to the Russian ports. Before the war the value of its timber shipments alone amounted to more than $5,000,000.

Early in the war the Russians invaded Memel, which led to a widely quoted edict from Berlin, "for each German village or farm burnt by these hordes three Russian villages or farms will be destroyed." The defense of Memel by two Prussian regiments consisted of the soldiers disbanding, mingling with the people, and thus compelling the population to help fight in defense of their city, a procedure which, it will be recalled, furnished the excuse for subsequent German atrocities in Belgium.

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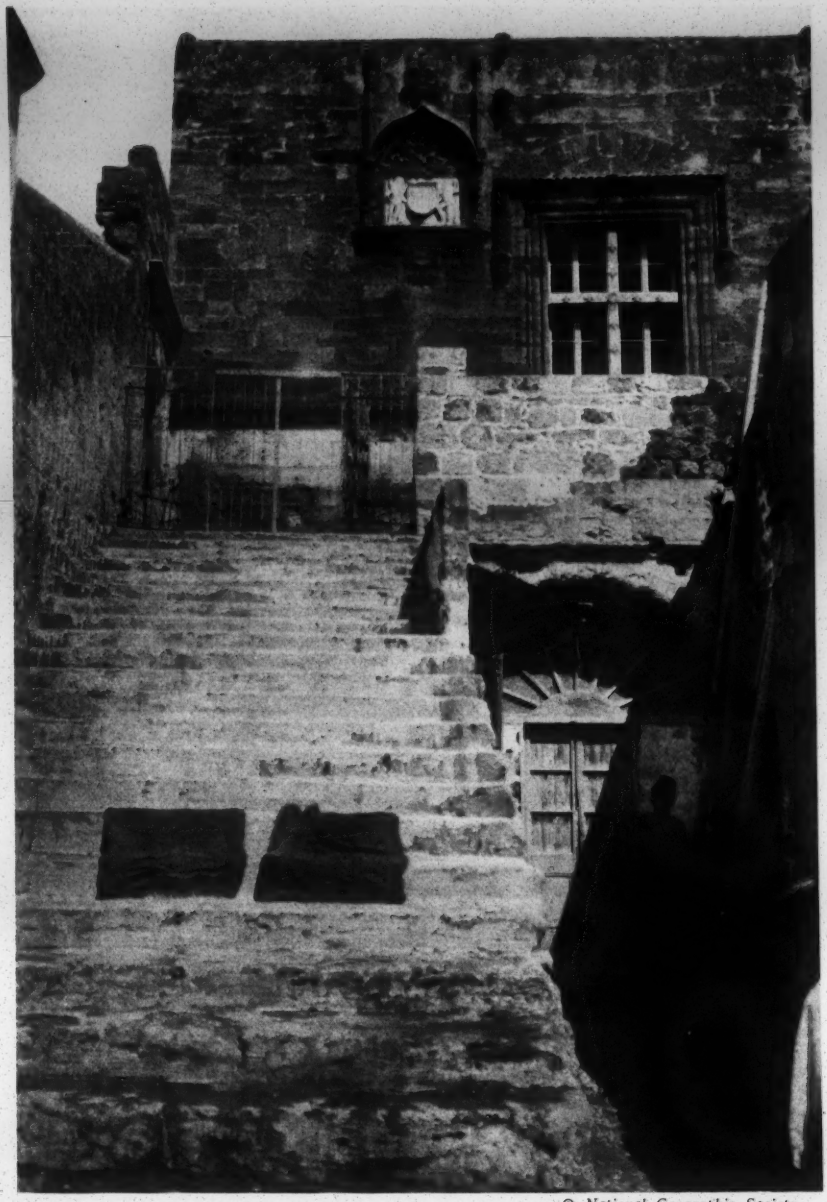

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ANCIENT STAIRCASE AND HOME OF A KNIGHT OF ST. JOHN AT RHODES: ISLAND OF RHODES. (See Bulletin No. 4.)

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America's New Wonderland

HOW much volcanoes mean in the lives of all human beings, even if they never have been within sight or sound of an eruption, is told graphically in a book* just issued by the National Geographic Society.

The book, "The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes," is written by Dr. Robert F. Griggs, and has a foreword by Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, president of the National Geographic Society, which sent out six expeditions to Katmai and the "Miracle Valley."

Within recent years the fascination and romance of science have begun to capture the popular imagination and this book adds a chapter to the wonder story of modern exploration and scientific study. It reveals many new facts about volcanoes which hitherto have largely eluded careful observation.

River That Climbed Over a Ridge

Not only does the book reveal the tremendous upheaval by which Katmai blew from its top 40 times the amount of earth and rock dug up to build the Panama Canal, leaving a hole big enough to contain all the buildings in 15 cities of New York's size, but it also deals with the world encircling climatic effects of volcanic eruptions and with that vast, fermenting Inferno from which it takes its title. In addition it describes the Alice-in-Wonderland phenomena in the wake of the eruption—such phenomena as a temporary giant river that cruised across the top of a ridge, of streams that shifted their courses, ash showers that formed great thermal blankets to preserve "permanent" snow drifts, and a flood which had one million times the destructive power of the Johnstown dam-burst.

Thrills of personal adventure, told in matter-of-fact fashion by the explorer-author, relate how members of the party walked over acres where a misstep would have plunged them to a parboiled death in seething cauldrons of the valley, with the ever-present fear that a chance gust might snuff out their lives with some gas that was more poisonous, if less odorous, than those among which they advanced.

Set Aside by President

Yet this region, now that it has been studied, would seem safer than Broadway or Michigan Avenue, since not a life was lost during the explorations, and reports and pictures brought back from an early trip were so impressive that the President of the United States immediately set it aside as a National Monument, some day to become a park for the American people comparable only to Yellowstone in its natural beauty, and like nothing else on earth in its amazing wonders.

The writer, after apologizing for his necessary use of superlatives, admits the fear that he, like Jim Bridger, herald of the Yellowstone's marvels, might

*"The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes" by Robert F. Griggs, Leader Katmai-Alaska Expeditions of the National Geographic Society. 350 pages; 262 engravings and color plates; 7 special maps. Cloth, $3.00, postpaid in U. S. A. May be had only from The National Geographic Society headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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Memel was known before the war as a prosperous city with neither a millionaire nor a pauper. It had flourishing iron foundries, shipbuilding yards and distilleries and it manufactured chemicals and soaps. Its population of some 22,000 was only 17 per cent Lithuanians, while in the rural sections of the present district of Memel 70 per cent of the people were Lithuanians. This proportion, not substantially altered today, is a complicating factor in its ultimate political disposition.

Bulletin No. 1, February 5, 1923.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

Many requests for the Geographic News Bulletin were made for the year ending with a February, 1923, issue. If you desire the Bulletins continued kindly notify The Society promptly. The attached form may be used:

School Service Department
National Geographic Society
Washington, D. C.

Kindly send ..... copies of the Geographic News Bulletin for the school year beginning with the issue of February 12, for class room use, to

Name .....

Address for sending Bulletins .....

City ..... State .....

I am a teacher in ..... school ..... grade

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Peking: The Chicago of China

PEKING, capital of China, whence come dispatches concerning the outbreaks in Honan, is described in the following communication to the National Geographic Society by James Arthur Muller:

As one passes within the walls of Peking he expects to find, as in other Chinese cities, the bannered signs of shopkeepers throwing gay canopies across narrow, tortuous, huddled streets; but behold! broad avenues three miles long, crossed by other broad avenues three miles long, making squares as regular as those of a checkerboard.

More Tatar Than Chinese

The visitor wonders whether the builders of this city saw in prophetic vision the streets of Chicago, Denver, and Philadelphia. Then he begins to suspect that Peking is the one spacious Chinese city because it is not a Chinese city at all, but a Tatar city, built by adventurous barbarians of the north, men who lived in the saddle, upon steppes and plains, whose feet were set in a large room.

Wonder does not stop with the length, breadth, and regularity of the streets. The traffic upon them is equally unexpected. In the cities of southern China, sedan-chairs edge their way with difficulty through the crowds of pedestrians and carrying coolies, who jostle each other in the narrow lanes. In Peking every street is alive with beasts and vehicles.

Camels, Mules and Autos

Down the smooth, tree-lined, macadam-center roads autos, cabs, rickshaws, and bicycles speed past slow-moving catafalques and crimson wedding processions. On each side, between sidewalk and trees, along a highway of turf, go mule-mounted equestrians, soldiers on sturdy Manchurian ponies, triplets of donkeys hauling lumber, brick, coal, and crockery, portly old gentlemen straddling diminutive asses, blue-canopied Peking carts, and caravans of camels out of the north.

Imagine a city where camels go up and down the streets upon legitimate business, not in a circus parade! The visitor strolls along Hatamen Street after breakfast, and there they are, on their knees, blinking in the morning sun—fine, shaggy, brown beasts, an occasional white one—rather dirty white—among them, chewing their cuds in leisure. The pavement before the shops whither they have carried merchandise has been their caravansary for the night. There are dozens upon dozens of them lining the sidewalk, up the street and down.

Almost as fascinating as the camels are the carts of Peking, or rather the little beasts which pull them—ponies, donkeys, mules, and nondescript, elusive creatures that are neither horse, mule, nor ass, but subtle, indistinguishable mixtures.

Buildings Also Unexpected

If streets and traffic, carts and camels are unexpected, no less so are the buildings. The traveler who has seen pictures of the majestic temples and palaces

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be set down as a Munchausen until future generations should vindicate him, as they did Bridger. He says:

"Many times also have I been thankful for the tools which modern invention had placed in our hands. With cameras and halftones and motion pictures to record our discoveries, our advantage over the old time explorer, who could supplement his accounts with nothing better than sketches, was enormous."

The 262 beautiful halftones and fascinating color plates in the book tell the scenic story of this new American wonder of the world better than verbal description.

Chemist Counts the "Smokes"

The text of the book forms a valuable contribution to the scientist's store of information about volcanism, mountain slides, floods, and kindred phenomena, and is no less accurate for being written so that the lay reader will be fascinated by its word pictures.

An amusing instance of this careful checking of all fact is related by Dr. Griggs, who tells how a skeptical chemist, after learning of the proposed name, the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, set out methodically to count the columns of hissing steam over the panoramic cauldron, for fear the name was an exaggeration. He returned to camp to report soberly that the name had been an error—it ought to have been called the Valley of a Million Smokes.

Bulletin No. 2, February 5, 1923.

Photograph by Robert F. Griggs. © *National Geographic Society.*

A REFRIGERATOR PROVIDED BY NATURE

Just behind the tent was an ash-covered snow-drift that made an ideal refrigerator. The expedition's larder was hardly equal to the accommodations. Just a short distance from this point food was cooked by burying pans in the hot earth.

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Drug Stores and the Dodecanese

BUSY BABBITT is apt to skip the item that Italy announced her cession of the Dodecanese to be invalid, and exclaim:

"What are these Greeks to me? I build bungalows, not Greek temples; and I haven't time for the theaters or the art galleries."

On the way home, however, Babbitt calls at the doctor's office, "Been feeling a little sluggish," and he takes the prescription to a drug store.

That's when the Dodecanese come in.

The Colossus of Kos

On Kos, second largest of the Dodecanese, lived Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine. For service to mankind this intellectual colossus of Kos deserves to overshadow the inanimate colossus of Rhodes, the largest island in the chain that straggles from Samos toward Crete.

Pharmako, or the island of herbs, now is herbless. But this "drug island," occupied some years ago by a single family, perpetuates its claim to being the first drug store in the world by the title "Phar. D." held by every drug clerk authorized to fill your prescription.

Pharmako is not one of the major land units which give the group its name—Twelve Islands. Even some of the twelve are, or have been, uninhabited, and on none of their rocky surfaces are the residents self-sustaining.

Bore Gift of Sponges and Loaves

When, in 1521, Kalymnos, just north of Kos, gave up its losing fight and sent a mission to surrender to Sultan Suleiman, the delegates took along a highly suggestive geographical exhibit. The gifts they bore consisted of sponges and white loaves. The first symbolized their principal industry—and today the sponges piled on the drug store counter most likely were collected by a Dodecanese diver—while the white bread showed the islanders' need of wheat from the mainland of Asia Minor since they could not live upon corn of their own growing.

When the sponge-grounds in the Aegean became depleted the Dodecanese divers discovered other beds off Tripoli and when Italy virtually made a monopoly of the fisheries there some of the divers fared as far away from home as Tarpon Springs, Florida, to ply their precarious trade.

The Isle of St. John

Patmos, northernmost of the group, known wherever the Bible is read because its cave sheltered St. John, was without a single inhabitant in the twelfth century.

It has long been a saying that the Greek islands are more Greek than Greece. The Dodecanese are among the most Greek of all the islands. Homer knew them all and mentions the leaders under whom their armies took part in the expedition against Troy.

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of Peking enters the imposing South Gate prepared for architectural raptures. But he finds the broad, straight highways of the city lined with insignificant one-story shops or with equally insignificant gray, windowless, one-story house walls, or long, unlovely, stretches of dull-red plastered fence walls.

The streets of Peking have neither skyline nor cornices. Were it not for the multitudinous traffic upon them, they would remind the traveler of the sprawling, God-forsaken streets of an American mining town, infinitely extended. The trees which line the central roadways are all of such recent planting that this city of the centuries suggests the latest off-spring of an energetic real-estate agent.

Shrines and Palaces

As soon, however, as the traveler enters a gateway, through one of the gray or dingy brick-red walls, he comes suddenly and unexpectedly upon a palace, silent in the sun, yet shouting aloud in the barbaric brilliance of its color—crimson columns, friezes of flashing gold on green, wide-flaring roofs of resplendent yellow, all above a triple-terraced platform of marble, white like snow. Or it may be a many-courted temple, where a hundred lamas drone chants before an inscrutable Buddha; or a wooded park, where emperors once took their pleasure, where century-old cedars shade pathways and pleasant lakes. Shrines nestle in mulberry groves and hillocks are crowned by Buddhist topes, from whose marble bases one looks out over the roofs of the city—miles and miles, it seems, of gray roofs—and in the center of all a great splotch of imperial yellow, the once "forbidden city," where dwelt the emperor, his sons and his daughters, his wives and his concubines.

Even the foreigners in Peking have fallen into this habit of surrounding themselves with blank and unexpressive walls; so that behind such barriers are found not only temples and parks and palaces, but colleges and churches and legation buildings.

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Hotels By-Products of Croesus' Coins

INTRODUCING Croesus—godfather of the modern hotel and patron saint of the traveling salesman!

The discovery of thirty gold pieces from Croesus' mint, which were part of the first series of gold coins ever struck off, recalls one of a number of heritages which civilization owes to buried Sardis.

Gold Oils World Trade

These new-found coins and a few other pieces already in museums signalize the Lydian inception of the gold basis for world trade—an instrumentality which lubricates international commerce to this day.

The hotel, or the humble inn which was its forerunner, was not possible until some standardized and compact medium of exchange was available. Therefore it is not surprising that historians generally agree that the first inns, where board and lodging might be had for payment of regular fees, were established in Lydia.

Before that time caravanseries were known. But they were evidences of eastern hospitality, set up at points where constant applications for entertainment grew burdensome, and were maintained as a sort of cooperative guest room, or modern municipal lodging house.

Cattle Cumbersome Money

Now it followed further that when a man might be assured convenient abode while he traveled, and when he could close a business "deal" with a pocketful of gold rather than a herd of cattle, that the trading radius of the ancient world suddenly expanded. Men began to travel for pleasure as well as for business; in fact the Greeks already had ventured forth "for historie and for discovery." Thus it would seem that not only the trade representative but the tourist and the geographer owe Croesus considerable gratitude.

The modern man can hardly apprehend, without an effort of his imagination, how great a boom it was to the ancients of the sixth century B. C. merely to visit another city. Important events were taking place. It was the time of Buddha and Confucius, of Solon and Cyrus, as well as Croesus, yet any high school boy of today can know more about what was going on in the world then, than any one living at that time possibly could have known.

The casual traveler was unknown. The "stranger" was always feared and his life was in jeopardy. Traders with caravans, sailors with their cargoes, high officials with stately retinues, a few beggars and religious pilgrims—these were the only travelers of that time.

Digging for History

Despite these marked steps toward culture, Lydia has remained only a flash in the pan of history. Until explorers recently began digging in the dust of the land on the Aegean shores of Asia Minor nearly all we knew of Lydia was the rambling but colorful story of Herodotus. And some of what we did

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One sort of ruins of the time of Hippocrates may well be considered the precursor of another humane institution of modern life, the hospital. On Kos may be seen the base stones and columns of an Asclepion, one of these institutions, which blended the modern functions of a temple, a sanitarium and a clinic. By incantations, charms and witchcraft the asclepia sought to heal the sick and it was against these practices that Hippocrates rebelled. He was not permitted to dissect human bodies but his study of animals and a comparison of their habits, anatomy and functions with those of man gave him a remarkable basis for diagnosis of human ills. His ideas about diet and regimen for the sick, for example, are remarkably sound when it is considered he was a pioneer in this field.

Healing Arts Among Greeks

To many sufferers the "faith cures" effected by the asclepia were potent; others were kept in physical condition by the gymnasia, but Hippocrates' fame as a surgeon, especially, soon spread far. Thus these remote Aegean islands had three therapeutic schools which correspond to our modern advocates of mental healing, medical practitioners and physical culturists.

Geologically the islands are fragments of Asia Minor, torn away by some remote volcanic upheaval. The sporadic formation of the group is attested by their other name, Sporades, given them in contrast to the Cyclades, so called because of their circular arrangement.

Should you visit a home in Rhodes you would get a first impression that some member of the household has a hobby for collecting curious, heterogeneous assortments of plates. When a child is born custom decrees that a plate be added to the family collection, and the pattern of this plate must be distinctive. Hence a genealogy is recorded in platters which, if they are the famous Rhodian ware, have great beauty and a high price, since only extreme stress or a generous offer would impel a family to part with any of the family tree.

Bulletin No. 4, February 5, 1923.

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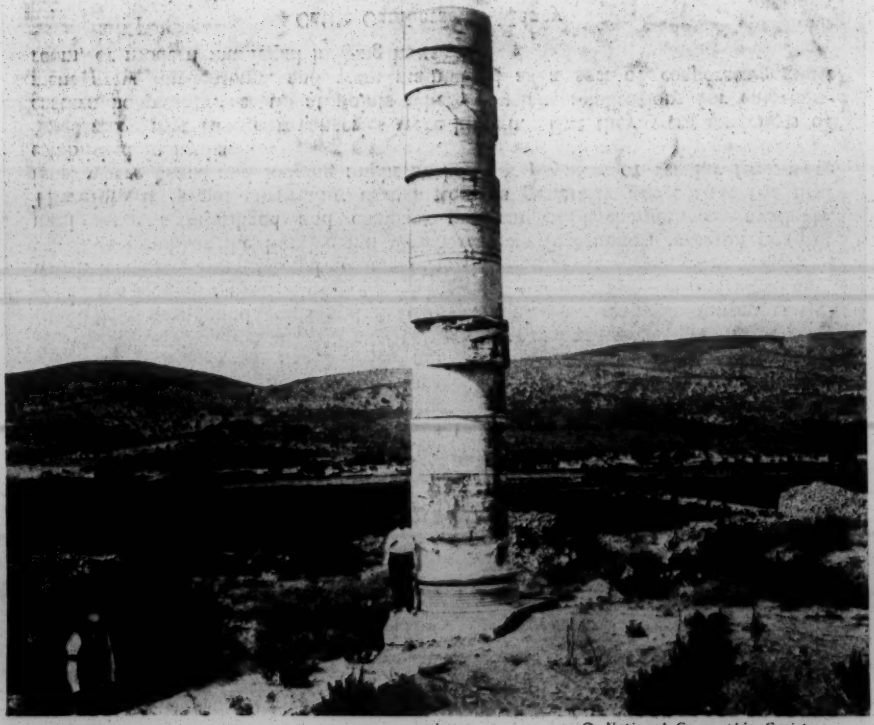
MARBLE BOAT ON LAKE AT THE SUMMER PALACE, NEAR PEKING

"It was all so pleasant and sunny and spacious and peaceful, so like a garden in wonderland, that I could forgive even that most absurd of all architectural absurdities, the notorious marble boat, built by the late Empress Dowager as a pleasure-house."

know, it now transpires, was wrong. The tale of how Solon, when asked by Croesus to name the happiest man in the world, did not reply that Croesus was the man, as the monarch expected, but mentioned instead some humble and dutiful citizens of Athens, may persist for its moral but has been ruled out of history.

Lydia's wealth is thought to have been due to various minerals and principally to her trade. Her capital, Sardis, was set on a hill whose ruins even now betoken an imposing dignity. The site is sixty miles northeast of Smyrna which, in the height of Sardis' power, was a Lydian city.

Bulletin No. 5, February 5, 1923.



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THE LAST STANDING COLUMN OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF HERA: ISLAND OF SAMOS

Herodotus wrote that the Temple of Hera was the largest seen by him in his travels. All that remains of this great temple today is one solitary column, with heaps of ruins scattered about, partly hidden by high weeds.